

Soviet Partisan Admits Graft By Bolsheviki

Albert Rhys Williams Tells Senators of Atrocities and Looting in Russia

Urges Aid by Americans

Testifies Revolution Was Born of Greed for Land, Not Because of Ideals

New York Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—Something like an agreement as to actual conditions in Russia under the government of the Bolsheviki was reached at the Overman propaganda inquiry committee hearing to-day when Albert Rhys Williams, who stated frankly that he was a violent partisan of the Soviets, admitted, in some degree, most of the accusations against them by previous witnesses. He conceded there had been many atrocities, much looting, great graft, "iron fisted" control, and unfair representation.

"But," he declared, "anybody who focuses his mind on the fringes and horrors of the revolution is doing himself an injustice. He is not seeing and understanding the heart and purpose of the revolution. All of the witnesses who went out to help the people, while they know all of these things, see the larger purposes and they love what is going on in Russia."

"None of the witnesses here has assailed the form of government in Russia," commented Senator Overman. "What has been assailed has been the practices of that government. Your idea, I take it, is that these practices are not enough to outweigh the hope and promise of the revolution."

"Exactly," said Mr. Williams.

No "Red" Funds Spent Here

Mr. Williams also demanded of the committee an investigation not only of the Bolsheviki propaganda in this country but of the source of the funds which he said are being spent by the Russian Information Bureau to bring about Allied intervention in Russia. He said Russia had not spent any money in America for propaganda purposes. Of the 2,000,000 rubles which he admitted had been appropriated for propaganda he said that 95 per cent had been spent in work against German and Austria and the rest in Britain and France. The idea of the Bolsheviki, he said, was to fight those who fought them. Since they considered America had been less offensive than the other Allies, they had spent no money here.

Mr. Williams began by an admission that the decree for the nationalization of women had probably, on the evidence submitted, been passed by a certain majority. But he declared it was not typical.

"Do you mean every Soviet is a law to itself?" asked Mr. Humes.

"No," he replied. "That was more or less so at first, but the chief criticism now is that the power is becoming too centralized. The indications are that it is swinging to the other side very strongly."

Few Bolters From Bolshevism

"Well, is not that comparable with the charges of a dictatorship?" "Yes, if you want to put it that way. The attack that is now being made by the other groups is that the Soviet is too strong."

He denied, however, that there was evidence that the great majority of the people were no longer Bolsheviki. While he admitted a swing away from Bolshevism among the people, including the working classes and peasants, he said the fact they had not rallied to the opportunities offered by the Allied troops, and that in the one absolutely free election held in Russia recently, in Vladivostok, the Bolsheviki had won, showed that the change had not yet gone very far.

He also argued that six million soldiers had taken their guns home with them and would be hard to coerce, but a little later admitted that this might not be true, since the Soviets had made an organized effort to gather in all the arms and had control of ammunition.

"I think the Soviet government has been much more ironfisted and strong than the Kerensky government was," he admitted a little later.

Many Seek Only Food

He admitted many Bolsheviki probably were keeping an eye only on the main chance of getting food, but pointed out that these had not deserted when they had the chance.

Mr. Williams also admitted the Soviet government was not fairly representative, since the 85 per cent of peasants have only the same representation as the 15 per cent of workmen. He said he was sure this would be remedied, but admitted he had only the faintest hope that the Soviet constitution gives one representative to every 25,000 workmen and one to 125,000 peasants. "It is unfair and unjust," he said.

The only thing in its favor is that the workmen are strongly in favor of the Soviet government."

He called attention to the demobilization of 12,000,000 men with "only the shooting up of a few Italians and a little rioting" and the organization of schools. He said that lately there had been a decided settling down, an acceptance of discipline by the people and an interest in industry, according to the best evidence.

Urges Aid by America

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He made a plea for American aid to Russia on the ground of self-interest, pointing out her resources and the vast market she would offer and the willingness of the Soviets to guarantee capital at the same time that they supervise it. Moreover, he remarked, under the Soviet Russia would be much more slow to develop industrially, and that it would be to America's interest not to have another commercial rival coming into the market.

Senator Wolcott then started by that statement from a partisan of the Soviets, and took pains to get it straight.

"Under the Soviet the people are not obsessed with the idea of building up a great industrial factory life," Mr. Williams explained.

He denied that leaders of the Bolsheviki had made money from the revolution, but said that there had been a big criminal fringe that had looted and robbed for private purposes and "nationalized private pocketbooks," as he put it. As proof of this and also of the Soviets' attitude toward it, he said an official report showed that 40 per cent of the men executed in Petrograd had been Soviet officials caught abusing their powers.

Senator Overman announced to-night that his committee would ask the Senate for permission to continue the propaganda inquiry. The committee adjourned to-night, and unless special permission is obtained to continue the hearings the committee will cease functioning when the present Congress expires next Tuesday. Senator Overman stated that there were many witnesses yet to be examined.

Senate Rushes Work

On Important Bills

Despite Eleventh Hour Activity, Leaders See Little Chance to Avoid Extra Session

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—Nearly a dozen Senate committees were in session to-day putting finishing touches to legislation, which it is hoped to get through before adjournment of Congress next week. Democrats and Republicans are said to agree that many important measures on the calendar must fail and that an extra session cannot be avoided.

Director General Hines conferred with the Appropriations committee of both houses, urging action on the bill providing \$500,000,000 additional for the Railroad Administration's revolving fund. Mr. Hines said failure of the bill would be disastrous to the railroads, to the next Liberty Loan campaign and to business generally.

During discussion in the Senate Finance Committee, it was said Republican leaders were disposed to cooperate in enacting the bond bill, which validates informal war contracts, and the railroad fuel bill.

Ownership by Corporation

Seventh—Ownership could be transferred to a large corporation created for the purpose, the government guaranteeing a minimum return in order to make the stock attractive and taking all the proceeds above a certain point.

Eighth—Outright sale of the vessels on terms and at prices sufficiently low to attract investors, the vessels to be distributed among many small companies. With any such plan would have to go legislation designed to assist the companies and equalize competition, including such subjects as subsidies, preferential tariffs, preferential railroad rates, etc.

Ninth—Combinations of the foregoing plans, as, for instance, the proposal that as many vessels be sold now as purchasers will buy on the basis of British cost of construction, the remaining ships to be allocated to the purchasers to operate in proportion to their purchases, the earnings of the purchased ships and those of the operated to be pooled and the net proceeds to be distributed pro rata between the government and the companies.

Senator Randall did not say so, but it is understood that this is the plan proposed and favored by the large existing American mercantile marine corporations, and that a bill embodying the essence of this plan will be introduced in Congress.

In outlining the proportions of the problem that must be settled soon, Senator Randall said:

"In the year immediately preceding the European war, the fiscal year ending June 30, 1914, less than a tenth of the water-borne foreign trade of the United States was carried in American vessels; more than 90 per cent was carried in foreign vessels. Soon after some shipping experts made a calculation of how large a merchant marine the United States would require in order to carry on its own vessels 60 per cent of its water-borne foreign trade. It was estimated that from six to ten million gross tons—\$500,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 deadweight tons—would be required. The figures seemed far beyond the wildest range of possibility. The national foreign trade council, in a report published early in 1916, made this not too sanguine forecast:

"At a time when predictions are freely made that the United States will become the world's banker and acquire the greatest share of the world's foreign trade, a shipping in the foreign trade of from 6,000,000 to 10,000,000 gross tons would appear not an excessive goal to be attained ten or twenty years hence."

"Ten or twenty years! Within five years from the day on which this

Senators Not Interested in Ship Problem

Only Handful Present to Hear Ransdell on \$660,000,000 Appropriation

No Solution in Sight

Shipping Board to Have Big Fleet With No Power, Unless Congress Acts, He Says

By Theodore M. Knappen • New York Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—The sundry civil appropriations bill carries \$660,000,000 for shipbuilding, which is more than the entire appropriations for all the purposes of government before the war. Yet when Senator Ransdell, of Louisiana, rose in the Senate to-day to discuss the vast and baffling problem of what is to be done with the far-flung fleet that these hundreds of millions, the billions that have gone before them and the hundreds of millions that are to follow them are giving us, only a handful of Senators were there to listen to him.

Senator Ransdell pointed out that the Shipping Board now owns about half the ocean-going shipping under the American flag, that the proportion grows daily as new ships go into commission and that in 1920 the government owned fleet will comprise more than 14,500,000 tons. No policy whatever has been established or even seriously thought out for either the present operation or for the disposition of this great fleet, he said.

As the law now stands, he continued, it is in the President's power to sell the whole fleet for little or nothing, but six months after the signing of the treaty of peace his powers will be summarily ended. He will not have the authority to drive a single rivet after the date or even to move a single ship.

Working Under Wrong Act

Contrary to the general impression, he said, the emergency fleet is not building under the act that established the Shipping Board and gave it power to create a corporation that should endure until five years after termination of the war. It is building under the terms of the deficiency appropriation act of June 15, 1917, which declares the building, operating and disposing power to the President, but terminates it six months after the termination of the war.

In about seven or eight months, both building and operating must stop, unless Congress acts in the meantime.

The only action Congress has taken is to provide the money for the continued building of the ships, according to the emergency fleet programme. There has been no attempt to alter that programme, no attempt to inform the Shipping Board what Congress expects of it—nothing but blind continuation of building—a continuation that was largely inevitable and of great industrial importance at this time. By the time delegated power expires the Shipping Board will be the owner of six or seven million tons of shipping, and with no power to do anything with it.

Senator Ransdell reviewed the various plans that have been advanced for the future of the government ships, one or some of which will have to be adopted in the near future if we are to have a real merchant fleet instead of a collection of ships rusting at their docks. Summarized, these different plans are as follows:

First—Complete government ownership and operation.

Second—Ownership and operation through a public corporation controlled by the government, with or without minority representation of private interests.

Third—Government ownership to be retained and the vessels to be manned and equipped by it, but private shipping companies would direct the business on a commission basis.

Fourth—The government to retain ownership, but private companies to man, equip and manage the vessels as the government's agents.

Fifth—The ships to remain in the hands of the government, which would completely equip and man them and rent them to private companies, the latter meeting all the business expenses and taking all the proceeds.

Sixth—Government ownership and "bare-boat" charter to private companies.

Ownership by Corporation

Seventh—Ownership could be transferred to a large corporation created for the purpose, the government guaranteeing a minimum return in order to make the stock attractive and taking all the proceeds above a certain point.

Eighth—Outright sale of the vessels on terms and at prices sufficiently low to attract investors, the vessels to be distributed among many small companies. With any such plan would have to go legislation designed to assist the companies and equalize competition, including such subjects as subsidies, preferential tariffs, preferential railroad rates, etc.

Ninth—Combinations of the foregoing plans, as, for instance, the proposal that as many vessels be sold now as purchasers will buy on the basis of British cost of construction, the remaining ships to be allocated to the purchasers to operate in proportion to their purchases, the earnings of the purchased ships and those of the operated to be pooled and the net proceeds to be distributed pro rata between the government and the companies.

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1,500,000 Rail Workers For U. S. Ownership

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—An overwhelming vote in favor of government ownership of the railroads has been recorded by the 1,500,000 members of the railway unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, according to Frank Morrison, secretary of the American Federation of Labor.

Executive heads of ten unions and the chief of the four railroad brotherhoods had previously agreed to support the government ownership principle and profit sharing features of the so-called Plumb plan submitted several weeks ago to the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee.

Under the Plumb plan the government would purchase the roads and place their operation in the hands of a corporation. Two-thirds of the directors would be named by the employees and the other third by the President. Profits would be split between the government and the employees.

hesitating production was ventured we will have under our present program a government-owned merchant marine larger than the outside limit set by the National Foreign Trade Council, to say nothing of the privately owned merchant marine under the American flag.

Two Startling Conclusions

"I said that the figures which I read to you lead to two startling conclusions. The first is that from the purely quantitative point of view the problem of the American merchant marine is solved. The second conclusion is that the problem of what to do with the government-owned merchant marine of the United States has now become the domestic factor affecting the future of the whole American merchant marine. As we deal wisely or unwisely with this problem, so will we determine the future of America upon the seas."

"We have proven during the past year that we as a nation have the resources and the energy, and that our workmen have the perseverance to create a fleet of 14,000,000 deadweight tons of shipping. Have we as a nation—have our statesmen and our business men, our merchants, our seamen, our trained officers—the patience and the expert knowledge to turn this emergency fleet, this powerful and triumphant instrument of war, into a serviceable and permanent instrument of American commerce?"

"The fleet will be there for our use. Are we going to let it rust and decay for lack of ability to use it? Are we going to be compelled to sell it to foreigners, who know how to use it better than we do? Or will we rise to this great national occasion? It is a question which challenges the nation as it has seldom been challenged before."

\$1,000,000,000 Wheat Bill To Be Rushed

Favorably Reported Out of Committee; Passage This Session Likely

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—The House bill appropriating \$1,000,000,000 to maintain the government guaranteed price of \$2.25 for the 1919 wheat crop was ordered favorably reported to-day by the Senate Agriculture Committee.

While approving the broad powers given the President by the House measure, the Senate committee specified that steps should be taken to bring conditions in the wheat market to a normal basis at the expiration of the period of control, July 1, 1920. Members of the committee said it was intended that the policy of price fixing should be discontinued as soon as possible.

Agencies designated by the President to carry out the provisions of the bill would be authorized to give preference to the export of flour rather than wheat, in order to stimulate the milling industry.

The bill will be pressed in the Senate, and members of the committee are confident that final action can be obtained before March 4.

Committee to Report To Confirm Williams

Opponents of Controller Expect to Prevent Senate Action at This Session

New York Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—By a solid party vote the Democrats on the Senate Banking and Currency Committee to-day agreed to make a favorable report on the nomination of John Skelton Williams to be Controller of the Currency for five more years. Opponents of Mr. Williams, nevertheless, were optimistic with regard to preventing his confirmation.

Only eight days, including Sunday, remain of the present session. The Senate has an overwhelming amount of work to do, despite which there are in prospect more than a dozen long speeches on the league of nations.

Led by Senator Weeks, of Massachusetts, the opponents of Mr. Williams are prepared to talk twenty-four hours a day from now until noon on March 4 to prevent the confirmation, if it should be necessary. The Senators voting for confirmation were Owen, Hitchcock, Reed, Pomeroy, Shaffroth, Hollis, Fletcher, Henderson and Kendrick, all Democrats. Those voting against confirmation were McLean, Gronna, Norris, and Frelinghuysen, Republicans. There were no Democratic absentees. Republican absentees were Page, Goff and Baird.

Test on Best Operation of Wires Asked

Mackay Companies Challenge Burleson to Competition in Managing

Would Let Public Decide

No Raise in Rates Promised if Lines Are Returned; They Also Assure Service

The Commercial Cable-Postal Telegraph companies yesterday challenged the Administration to make practical, immediate test of the relative merits of government and private operation of the nation's telegraph systems.

"Let the government return our wires to us," said officials of the Mackay companies. "Let them keep the Western Union wires, since they seem so anxious to, and since the Western Union people seem so willing to have them. We will operate our system along our own lines. The government can operate the Western Union wires as it deems most expedient. Then the public can decide for itself which arrangement best serves the public."

Such an experiment, officials of the company pointed out, should remove this much discussed question altogether from the realm of the conjectural and the theoretic. Deterioration of the service under government management is, they emphasized, universal conceded. The government has pleaded in extenuation abnormal and extreme conditions. Here, they said, is a chance for the two methods of operation to be tried out side by side, contending against the same obstacles, the same problems. The result should be to demonstrate which is really the most efficient, the most economical.

Say Rate Raise Not Needed

"If the Administration is not afraid of that test," it was said, "there is no reason why it should not accept our offer and leave the decision to the public."

The Mackay companies, it was added, are ready to enter upon such a contest immediately.

The issuance of their challenge at this time was prompted by the publication yesterday of the recommendation of Charles E. Elmquist, president of the National Association of Railway and Utilities Commissioners, that all telephone and telegraph companies be restored to private management on June 30.

Commenting on this recommendation, William J. Deegan, secretary of the Mackay companies, said yesterday that his only objection to it was that June 30 is too far off. Still higher charges for service, he declared, are now in contemplation by the government, shortly to become effective. Emphasizing the fact that the Mackay lines do not desire or need any rate increases, he added that the sooner the Postal Telegraph lines were restored the better it would be for the public.

Would Compete With Burleson

In a prepared statement Mr. Deegan presented the case of the Mackay companies as follows:

"The only reason given by Mr. Burleson for holding on to these lines is that he may finance crippled telephone companies by increasing rates. The Postal Telegraph-Commercial Cables are asking for no financial assistance from the United States government, and they do not wish to increase rates, and we will say now that if Mr. Burleson thinks that the Bell Telephone and the Western Union or any other wire companies need government assistance, we suggest that he keep those for the present and turn back our lines to us, and it will give us great pleasure to compete with Mr. Burleson in the telegraph and cable business."

"Judging from the complaints of deteriorated service which are being made since Mr. Burleson took control, we have no doubt of our ability to more than hold our own against any telegraphs and cables operated by him."

"Furthermore, in addition to the recent increase in telephone rates there

is a movement on foot to increase telegraph rates, so the sooner the lines are turned back the less likelihood there is of an increase in the telegraph rates, because if we get our lines back we will not increase telegraph rates."

"The National Association of Railway and Public Utility Commissioners is right in its statement that the compensation contracts agreed upon between Postmaster General Burleson and the Bell Company are a discrimination against other companies which were not in favorably treated."

"The Postmaster General treated the Bell and the Western Union so liberally in his compensation awards to those companies that the government is losing heavily on these contracts every day they continue in force."

"Mr. Burleson stated before the House Committee on the postoffice bill that if the revenues from the lines were not adequate he would not hesitate to raise the rates to enable him to pay those compensations. In other words, telephone and telegraph rates are being and will continue to be increased in order to enable the Postmaster General to pay the Western Union and the Bell Telephone Companies the high awards which he made them. We urge the immediate return of the lines, and we will operate our lines to us and we will operate them in competition with the government without increasing rates."

House Committee to Ask Wires Vote Be Expedited

Right of Way for Resolution to End U. S. Control December 31 Is Proposed

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—Right of way for action on the resolution to end government control of telephone and telegraph systems on December 31 next will be proposed this week by the House Rules Committee. Chairman Poy announced this decision to-day after a meeting of the committee.

Public action was taken in regard to other measures, including the public buildings bill and the prohibitory immigration legislation, for which rules have been asked.

Debate on the wire control bill will be limited to an hour and a half. Three hours will be given to the Lane plan and one hour to the retirement fund bill.

House leaders said to-day that action might be taken on all measures this week. Work on the sundry civil appropriation bill was resumed in the House to-day, and after its passage Democratic Leader Kitchin will call up the new legislation for the next Liberty loan. The general efficiency bill is the only one of the annual appropriation measures yet to pass the House. It will not be ready for consideration until near the end of the week.

Rodman Wanamaker To Be Host to Officers of 27th

Rodman Wanamaker, chairman of the executive committee of the Mayor's Committee of Welcome, will entertain at dinner to-night the twenty officers of the 27th Regiment now in America. After dinner he will take them to the Millrose Athletic Club games at Madison Square Garden.

American Girl Won Divorce in Berlin. Then Imprisoned

No Longer Citizen of Germany. May Gentz, Artist, Was Sent to Prison Camp; Is Trying to Come Home

In Bern, Switzerland, a New York girl, just released from a German prison camp after two years' imprisonment, is living the role of "the girl without a country." She is waiting for the State Department at Washington to unravel its red tape and permit her to return to the home of her birth, never again, as she says, to get near enough to the ocean even to think of Europe.

About six years ago May Gentz, then known as a promising art student in New York, went to Europe to finish her education. After studying in Paris and Rome she went to Berlin, where she opened a studio. Later she married Hugo Fuhrman, a German citizen.

Mrs. Fuhrman wished to return to the United States during the early part of the war, but, at her husband's request, remained in Berlin. Finally, when the United States entered the conflict, she made an attempt to leave the country, but was told that, as the wife of a German, she was a German citizen.

Patriotism proved stronger than marriage ties, and she obtained a divorce. The next day she was arrested as an American citizen, and was sent to the prison camp at Darmstadt.

After the armistice was signed she was released and made her way to Switzerland. Her passports, made out in Berlin, still declared her a German citizen, and the American consulate refused to vize them.

Her plight was made known yesterday in a delayed cablegram received by her brother, William Gentz, assistant advertising manager for the Vita-graph Company.

"What I went through in prison will have to wait until I get home. Too horrible to write," she said.

Mr. Gentz at once forwarded to Washington proofs of his sister's citizenship.

"The cablegram is the first word I have had in four years," he said.

10,000 Workers in White Goods Join Strike To-day

Demanding the establishment of a forty-four-hour work week in their industry and increases in wages, 10,000 white goods workers, most of them girls, are going on strike to-day. The strike is the latest in a series of negotiations between the White Goods Workers' Union and the Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Association.

The "kimono children" dress and the kimono industries, in which strikes were called last week involving 12,000 workers, settlements already have begun, according to Benjamin

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